

impact report

April 2020
-March 2021



This Impact Report highlights the African Education Program's work accomplished from April 2020 through March 2021, a year like no other.

The African Education Program (AEP)'s mission is to empower the youth of Zambia through education and leadership development, to break the cycle of poverty in their communities.

Since 2007, AEP has awarded over 2,600 individual annual scholarships, enabling 450 young women and men to complete high school and 80 to graduate from college. Scholarships enable girls and boys to continue their education in public schools and, most importantly, create a base for the programs provided at the after-school learning and leadership center.

Before COVID-19, on a daily basis, over 400 children and youth took advantage of programs focused on quality education through academic tutoring, leadership development and volunteerism, gender equity, self-esteem building, period poverty elimination, HIV/AIDS and health awareness, nutrition and food security, and the arts and creativity.

AEP's model is based on creating opportunities so that these children and youth can build their resiliency and overcome any challenges that may prevent them from reaching their full potential. This creates an environment for these youth to break out of their impoverished situation and become the leaders that their communities need to end systemic poverty.

In March of 2020, AEP had to close the doors to the center due to the pandemic. AEP launched the COVID-19 Emergency Relief Family Fund and quickly transitioned its work to support everyone's safety and health, while also keeping the youth educationally engaged while schools were shut down.

INTRODUCTION

MESSAGE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Words cannot explain how proud I am of my Zambian colleagues who have spearheaded each and every initiative we took to help ensure the health and safety of our girls, boys, and their families...



Dear Friends,

On March 18th, 2020, it was announced that schools in Zambia would close the following week and the declaration of COVID-19's arrival in the country was imminent. I boarded one of the last flights before airlines closed down their Lusaka routes. As I left Zambia that night, I never could have imagined when writing this letter over a year later, I still would not have returned. I never could have imagined the devastation and loss this virus would create in Zambia, in the United States, and around the world. I never could have imagined how the African Education Program's work in Kafue would so drastically pivot in the coming weeks and months.

Words cannot explain how proud I am of my Zambian colleagues who have spearheaded each and every initiative we took to help ensure the health and safety of our girls, boys, and their families, while also keeping them educationally engaged without internet access. Their dedication and commitment to our communities in Kafue is astounding. Their leadership through unthinkable challenges is incredible.

The threat of COVID-19 remains with us today. While we are aware that the pandemic is far from over, we eagerly await the day when we can reopen our afterschool learning and leadership center and Read for Rose special education center fully. Until then, we will continue our remote outreach and do everything we can to create impact and change.

On behalf of everyone with the African Education Program and our local programs in Zambia, I would like to say thank you for making our work possible.

Always grateful,

Julie-Anne Savarit-Cosenza
Co-founder & Executive Director

IMPACT IN NUMBERS

SCHOLARSHIPS



250 High School Scholarships



27 High School Graduates



42 College Scholarships



16 College Graduates



REMOTE TUTORING

Every week, high school students safely picked up printed learning packets which included lessons and activities in core subjects. The students also received one-on-one tutoring over the phone from assistant teachers (students in their gap year before college who volunteer as tutors and mentors to the younger students.)

DISTRIBUTIONS

280

Families received three weeks worth of food ahead of a lockdown

550

Reusable face masks distributed to families

262

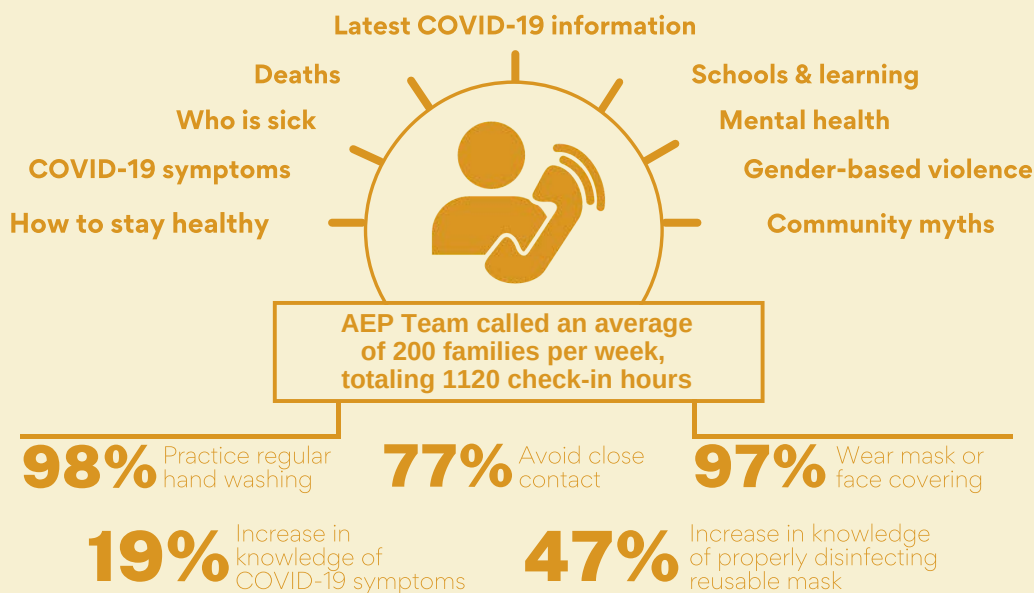
Students collect hand sanitizer each week to use at school

117

Female students received reusable menstrual pads and cups

Despite the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, you continued to make a difference in the lives of the children, youth, and their families in Kafue, Zambia.

WEEKLY HEALTH CHECK-IN CALLS



INFORMATION SHARING



Illustrated flyer about COVID-19 safety measures and precautions developed in local language and shared with all families



88 social media posts on COVID-19 safety and PPE donations made to AEP

54 social media posts on remote educational outreach



FAMILIES

306


Families, approximately 2,000 family members, benefiting from AEP's programs


COVID-19 EMERGENCY RELIEF FAMILY FUND




AEP continually adapted its health and education outreach programs based on the needs of the girls, boys, and their families, as well as the pandemic surges and the ability to meet safely in-person.

 **Weekly Health Check-in Calls** | The AEP Team in Zambia has been making weekly health check-in calls to about 200 families with phones to monitor the health and well-being of members, dispel myths about COVID-19 in the community, and to share important health-related communications about masks, social distancing and the use of hand sanitizer to keep the virus away.

 **In-person Learning** | When safe to do so, AEP facilitated socially-distance, masked-up outdoor tutoring session for small groups of students. Fortunately, the Read for Rose special education center was able to stay open most of the time due to the small number of students and by firmly following COVID-19 safety precautions. Thanks to a special grant, tablets were purchased for the students to enhance their learning experience.

 **Remote Learning** | AEP also created a “virtual” experience for their student beneficiaries to keep them engaged in their schooling. Educational learning packets were distributed and staff and high school graduate volunteers reached out individually to each student to tutor them remotely through phone calls or individual, socially distanced learning experiences. Due to the constant communication between the team on the ground in Kafue and the families of the student beneficiaries, AEP has a zero school dropout rate which is extremely rare in the surrounding districts in Zambia.

 **Distributions** | At the beginning of the pandemic, AEP purchased three-weeks’ worth of food for 278 families for an emergency food distribution that took place just in time for a lock-down. Reusable masks made by AEP’s Threads of Hope tailoring shop were also distributed to families. Hand sanitizer is also distributed each week to students to use at school.



IMPACT STORIES



Scholarship Impact | Bester, Recent College Graduate

Thanks to AEP's Scholarship Program, Bester completed high school and recently graduated from the Kafue College of Nursing and Health Sciences as a clinical officer (similar to a nurse practitioner).

"Being awarded a sponsorship was a dream come true. I remember going home and telling my family that we would not have to worry about school fees. I have always known that I wanted to be a successful young woman to change my life and also that of my family. AEP has made it possible. I am able to make very sound decisions and better impact my community positively."



COVID-19 Fund Impact | Macfarlane, 12th Grade

Macfarlane and his family are one of hundreds to have benefited from AEP's many COVID-19 initiatives.

"I was happy to have been given a food hamper for my family. It was a big relief. It kept me and my family safe in our house. I am also able to stay focused on my education and the learning packets are helping me to prepare to take my final examination for secondary school. And my friends come to me to ask for sanitizer and I do give it to them. I am happy to be able to help as I am also being helped. It is enough to go around for me and my friends, I refill it every week."



Alumni Impact | Monica, College Graduate

Thanks to AEP's Scholarship Program, Monica completed high school and, in 2014, graduated from the Lusaka Institute of Applied Sciences as a registered nurse.

"Achieving my dreams and being able to support and help my parents financially and siblings at school is a blessing. Today, I am employed as a nurse with the Ministry of Health in the Masaiti District in the Copperbelt province. It's nice working in the rural part of Zambia. I am happy knowing that I am now a role model to the young people here. I always share advice and tell them to believe in yourself and concentrate on your dreams and goals!"



PHOTO SPOTLIGHT

The Read for Rose Special Education Center creates learning and life-skills opportunities for some of the communities more marginalized girls and boys. Continuing to provide these opportunities remained a priority, whether it was one-on-one at the center, outside in small groups, or at the children's homes.

AEP FAMILY



From left to right, starting top row: Febby Choombe (Special Education Manager), Ceasar Samwaka (Academic Programs Manager), Annabel Mumba (Donor Relations Coordinator), Nebat Mwanga (Info & Comms Technology Teacher), Christine Mulenga (Resource Development Coordinator), Andrew Samutumwa (Resource Development Coordinator), Julie-Anne Savarit Cosenza (Co-Founder & Executive Director), Joy Mweemba (Executive Director, Zambia), Pamela O'Brien (Development Director), Lumuno Chongo (Program Director), Annie Nyambe (Special Education Assistant), Teddy Sakala (M&E Coordinator), Masmo Shiyala (M&E Coordinator), Violet Mukumbwa (Entrepreneurship Assistant), Benard Milanzi (Entrepreneurship Coordinator)

Many thanks to...



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